

Reliable

JOB SERVICE  **SOURCE**

The **Reliable SOURCE** is published quarterly by The Miles City Job Service.

Montana's Minimum Wage Increase

Montana's Minimum Wage will rise to \$7.80 per hour January 1, 2013 pursuant to Montana Code Annotated 39-3-409.

The law requires a minimum wage adjustment annually based on changes in inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) from August of the preceding year to August of the year in which the calculation is made. An adjustment to the minimum wage is to be calculated no later than September 30 of each year based upon any increase in the CPI, rounded to the nearest five cents.

The current 2012 minimum wage rate is \$7.65. Based on an increase in the CPI of 1.7% from August, 2011 to August, 2012, the calculation used for determining the minimum wage rate for 2013 is as follows:

$$\$7.65 \times .017\% = \$.13, \text{ rounded to } \$0.15$$

Information relating to Montana's minimum wage may be downloaded from DLI's website at www.mtwagehourbopa.com.



Mark Your Calendar For:

MILES CITY JOB FAIR 2013

Thursday, April 11

Noon to 4 p.m.

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Montana Department of
LABOR & INDUSTRY

Fraudulent email being sent to U.S. employers including Montana

The Montana Department of Labor and Industry is notifying Montana employers of a fraudulent email that first appeared in the eastern U.S. and has now been seen in Montana. “We want to make sure Montana employers are aware of this scam, so they don’t unknowingly give information to a potential identity thief”, said Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly.

The initial email surfaced in Massachusetts purporting to be from that state’s unemployment assistance agency. It was asking for information from employers about former employees’ wage and separation information.

Reports of similar emails being sent to employers in Montana and other states have been received. The email references the Division of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) and the need for former employees’ information in relation to a claim that has been filed. The Montana agency responsible for unemployment insurance is the Montana Unemployment Insurance Division (UID).

The Montana Unemployment Insurance Division’s business practice is to make requests for confidential employee information by telephone, USPS mail or the secure file transfer system for Montana, *ePass*. Montana UID staff do some non-confidential exchange of information via email, in which case the email includes the staff person’s name, position, phone number and the “mt.gov” extension in the “From” email address.

The Department recommends that any Montana employer that receives this fraudulent email not reply with any information and delete the email.

Should employers have questions concerning the receipt of suspicious email displaying as being from the Montana Unemployment Insurance Division, contact the Montana UID fraud investigator at (406) 444-1709 or email dliuidci@mt.gov.

H2A TRAINING ~ Report by Ron Nemec

The Foreign Labor Training Team held their annual training in Glasgow from September 12, 2012 to September 13, 2012. The training was very well attended as 42 individuals from across the state were present at the training.

This year the training team decided the first day of the training would be held at a training site where the attendees were divided up into teams that would go through six stations that reflected their work in the field. The attendees had to conduct measurements of the various stations along with starting the correct paperwork as though they were completing an actual inspection. Those stations would be the following:

1. A sheep wagon
2. A mobile housing unit (camper trailer) generally used by custom combiners
3. Fixed housing/ grounds and outside of unit
4. Fixed housing/inside
5. First aid/fire extinguishers
6. Measuring device/tips



At the afternoon session each team reported to the trainers their findings and explained how and why they came up with their findings. The training team then went through and gave the correct information to the teams and a discussion with a question and answer session at the end of the first day. The first day’s training was well received by all.

The second day of the training opened with a question and answer session of the previous day’s training. The rest of the day covered subjects ranging from migrant seasonal farm workers, safety of state employees conducting inspections, collecting data, and having a guest speaker talk about Montana Legal Services for farm workers.

Montana Employers will see a Decrease in their 2013 Unemployment Insurance Rates

The Department of Labor and Industry announced today that the Unemployment Insurance Contribution Rate Schedule will be adjusted from schedule 7 to schedule 6, resulting in a decrease in many Montana employer's contribution rates for 2013. "This is good news for Montana employers, both large and small, as we continue our economic recovery in the state", said Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly. "UI benefits provide a critical financial safety net for Montana's unemployed workers, and as more Montanans return to work the demand for those benefits decreases, in turn lowering the rate schedule."

During the recession Montana Employers saw an increase in their contribution rate schedules. Each year a statutory formula is used to determine employer contribution rates for the next calendar year. Legislation, initially passed in 1979, requires the automatic rate adjustment. There are 11 schedules as provided by law and the rates are decreasing from schedule 7 to schedule 6. The contribution rates in 2013 will average 2.12% as compared to 2.32% in 2012.

Throughout the recession, Montana has been one of only 18 states in the U.S. to maintain a positive UI Trust Fund balance. This means through careful management, and the timely contributions from Montana businesses, Montana did not have to borrow from the federal government in order to continue paying state UI benefits. Many states are now in the position of requiring additional taxes from employers in order to pay back loans to the federal government and achieve solvency for their trust fund accounts.

"Our statutory unemployment rate schedule is doing exactly what it is designed to do, provide for benefits during economic downturns, while rebuilding the fund as the economy grows", said Unemployment Insurance Administrator Roy Mulvaney. Some employers will not experience a rate decrease as individual rates are based on an employer's overall unemployment rate history.

Individual employer rate information will be mailed in mid-December. For general information on UI rates, please visit: <http://uid.dli.mt.gov>.



Unemployment Rate Continues Drop to 6.0%

Montana's unemployment rate continued to move downward in October, dipping 0.1% to 6.0%. The national rate increased by 0.1% in October following a large drop last month.

"Montana continued to add jobs over the last month, putting 1,500 more Montanans back to work," said Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly. "This month's job gain is the strongest monthly gain since the end of the recession in 2009. Montana's economy is picking up steam."

Montana's total employment increased by 1,527 jobs over the month on a seasonally adjusted basis, compared to an average monthly gain of 708 jobs per month over the last year. Total employment includes both payroll workers, plus agricultural and self-employed workers. Payroll employment estimates indicated an increase of 2,800 jobs, with a gain of 2,000 jobs in the private sector. Private sector job gains were greatest in the Professional and Business Services industry and in Leisure and Hospitality.

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) increased by 0.1% in October, with a slight decline in the energy index. The food index increased by 0.2%. Core inflation, measured by the all items less food and energy index, rose 0.2% largely because of an increase in the shelter index. The 0.3% rise in the shelter index is the largest since March 2008 and provides further evidence of a recovery in home and rental prices.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

from the staff at the Miles City Job Service!



Noel Gruba

Kim Blunt

Ron Nemec

Cindy Erickson



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Kim Blunt.....Manager
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Cindy Erickson.....Employment Consultant
Noel Gruba.....Employment Consultant

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learn from yesterday, live for today,
hope for tomorrow.
-Albert Einstein



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